

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NASA-01 ACDA-07 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 /083 W

-----061720Z 085631 /43

O P 061110Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASH DC IMMEDIATE 391

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS PRIORITY

S E C R E T VICTORIA 306

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINS, SE

SUBJECT: COUP D'ETAT IN SEYCHELLES: BACKGROUND

1. WHILE IT IS CLEARLY TOO EARLY TO PROVIDE IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF JUNE 5 COUP D'ETAT IN SEYCHELLES, SOME TENTATIVE OBSERVATIONS CAN FAIRLY BE MADE.

2. COUP WAS OBVIOUSLY WELL PLANNED AND EXECUTED, CATCHING SECURITY FORCES COMPLETELY OFF GUARD. ACCORDING TO WIFE OF SPECIAL BRANCH HEAD DOUGLAS MOTT, FIRST INKLING HER HUSBAND HAD OF TROUBLE WAS 0200 VISIT AT HOME FROM SPECIAL FORCE COMMANDER STONE. TWO MEN LEFT IN DIRECTION OF SHOOTING AND WERE APPARENTLY QUICKLY SEIZED BY ARMED CIVILIAN GROUP ENGAGED IN ASSAULT ON POLICE ARMORY. SIMULTANEOUSLY, COUP MAKERS CAPTURED OTHER POLICE ARMORY AND KEY COMMUNICATIONS POINT S

INCLUDING CABLE AND WIRELESS OFFICE AND RADIO SEYCHELLES. IN ENSUING SHOOTUP, A FEW (WE HEAR 3) POLICEMEN WERE KILLED. CERTAINLY, A NUMBER

OF LOCAL POLICEMEN, INCLUDING SEVERAL RELATIVELY HIGH RANKING

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OFFICERS NOW MUCH IN EVIDENCE, ACTIVELY ASSISTED IN MAJOR OPERATIONS.

3. BELIEVE TIMING OF COUP ATTEMPT WAS DICTATED BY TWO FAVORABLE CIRCUMSTANCES, FIRST, ABSENCE OF SEYCHELLES PRESIDENT MANCHAM AND ALL

IMPORTANT SDP MINISTERS, DEPRIVING LOYALIST FORCES OF RALLYING POINT FOR RESISTANCE AND SECONDLY, PLAUSIBLE EXCUSE IN MOVE TO POST-

PONE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS. MANCHAM DEPARTED SEYCHELLES FOR LONDON COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE JUNE 1 ALONG WITH TWO SDP MINISTERS ROBERT DELORIE (INTERNAL AFFAIRS) AND GONZAGUE D'OFFAY. TWO OTHER SDP MINISTERS WERE ALREADY ABROAD (ANDRE UZICE AND DAVID JOUBERT). AFTER MANCHAM'S DEPARTURE, KEY MINISTER TO GET OUT OF WAY WAS FINANCE MINISTER CHETTY WHO LEFT ONLY EIGHT HOURS BEFORE COUP LAUNCHED. TWO REMAINING SDP MINISTERS (MOULINIE AND PRAGRASSEN) ARE DECIDED LIGHTWEIGHTS. IN CONTRAST ALL OF RENE'S SEYCHELLES PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY (SPUP) STALWARTS WERE ON HAND. ACCORDING EARLY ACCOUNTS, MINISTER FERRARI AND LOIZEAU AND FIREBRAND BACK BENCHER JACQUES HODOU L WERE ALL ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS. INTERESTINGLY, WIVES OF RENE AND FERRARI WERE OUT OF COUNTRY.

4. OTHER CRUCIAL FACTOR (PLAUSIBLE CAUSE) WAS PROVIDED BY MAJOR ERROR OF JUDGEMENT ON MANCHAM'S PART AND A PROBABLE CERTAIN AMOUNT OF DUPLICITY BY RENE. TOWARD END OF LAST WEEK WE HAD HEARD REPORT FROM MP'S OF BOTH PARTIES THAT MANCHAM AND RENE HAD AGREED TO POSTPONE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS FROM JUNE 1979 TO 1984. MANCHAM THOUGHT HE AND RENE WERE IN FIRM AGREEMENT ON THIS POINT WHICH WAS TO HAVE BEEN SUBJECT OF PARLIAMENTARY MOTION TO AMEND CONSTITUTION TO BE INTRODUCED AT SPECIAL JUNE 22 SESSION OF NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, TWO DAYS AFTER MANCHAM'S REJECTED RETURN FROM EUROPE. IN ADDITION TO MANCHAM, RENE ALSO APPARENTLY GAVE SEVERAL SPUP MP'S (NOT INVOLVED IN COUP) TO BELIEVE THAT HE WAS GOING ALONG WITH POSTPONEMENT. SINCE NO ANNOUNCEMENT OF MOTION WAS MADE BEFORE MANCHAM'S DEPARTURE, HOWEVER, RENE COULD MAKE CLAIM THAT HE REFUSED TO GO ALONG WITH MANCHAM'S "DICTATORIAL TENDENCIES".

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5. TO HAVE BEEN KEPT SUCH A CLOSELY GUARDED SECRET, COUP PLANNING WAS OBVIOUSLY RESTRICTED TO HANDFUL OF SPUP LEADERS. THESE OFFICIALS WERE OBVIOUSLY RELAXED AND CONFIDENT SINCE ONLY HOURS PRIOR COUP ATTEMPT, RENE, FERRARI AND LOIZEAU ATTENDED COCKTAIL RECEPTION AT WHICH FERRARI SAID, WITH APPARENT SINCERITY, THAT HE WAS UNSURE WHETHER TO TAKE SUNDAY OR MONDAY FLIGHT TO ATTEND ILO CONFERENCE IN GENEVA.

MATTSON

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NNN



## Message Attributes

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